

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

JALON R. HALL,
Plaintiff,
v.
GOOGLE LLC, et al.,
Defendants.

Case No. [23-cv-06574-JST](#) (AGT)

DISCOVERY ORDER

Re: Dkt. No. 110

In June, the Court reviewed *in camera* text messages between Jalon Hall and her father. Her father is an ordained minister, and Hall had invoked the clergy-penitent privilege. With one exception, the Court held that the messages weren't protected and ordered Hall to produce them. Dkt. 105.

More recently, Hall found additional text messages with her father. Dkt. 109 at 2. Invoking the clergy-penitent privilege again, she redacted portions of these messages and submitted them to the Court for *in camera* review. Dkts. 109, 110, 119.


Under federal common law, a clergy-penitent privilege “embrac[es] any confession by a penitent to a minister in his capacity as such to obtain such spiritual aid as was sought and held out.” *Mockaitis v. Harcleroad*, 104 F.3d 1522, 1532 (9th Cir. 1997) (simplified),

overruled on other grounds by City of Boerne v. Flores, 521 U.S. 507 (1997).

Here, in the text-messages at issue (HALL001068–73), Hall redacted only messages in which her father offered spiritual advice or counseling. Given their content, the redacted messages are plausibly protected by the clergy-penitent privilege. But even if they are not covered by that privilege, these messages are not relevant to “any party’s claim or defense.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(1). Hall need not produce unredacted versions of them.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: July 25, 2025



Alex G. Tse
United States Magistrate Judge